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## Sunrise in Italy

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APR 18 1967

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The Secret Surrender, by Allen Dulles. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 42s.

MR ALLEN DULLES here reveals for the first time, in fascinating and meticulous detail, the history of the negotiations leading up to the surrender of the German armies in Italy in April 1945. It is also the story of a personal mission, told with restraint and characteristic modesty by the author, who was at the time ostensibly the Special Assistant to the American Minister in Switzerland, and in fact the head of the key mission inside Europe of the Office of Strategic Services under General Donovan, and through him with direct access to the President of the United States. The real assignment of Mr Dulles lay in providing Washington with intelligence about what was happening in Germany and the Balkans, but his present study is essentially confined to one of several remarkable achievements of his intelligence organization: Operation 'Sunrise' (known also as 'Crossword' in British circles), initiated by him and his closest collaborator Gero von Gaevernitz, by profession an American businessman of German origin with close connections with the anti-Hitler opposition in Germany. But that is another, if equally remarkable, story, and has already been told by the author in his previous book *Germany's Underground*.

Mr Dulles took up his post in Switzerland in November 1942, and proceeded with calculated and efficient caution. Imperceptibly and inexorably, his listening post in Berne became concerned with analysing the mounting rumours, scraps of information, and incipient feelers from the Nazis, which might indicate early signs of a mood of 'surrender by persuasion' on their part. The snowballing implications of one such successful move would be limitless in bringing about the end of hostilities.

When it came, through developing lines from Italy to Switzerland, it was due to the self-effacing and persistent skill of Mr Dulles and his subordinates that precisely this historical chain of consequences was brilliantly initiated in one of the most ably conducted secret operations of the war.

It is impossible, in a short review, to do justice to the ingenuities, the hazards, and the skills involved in Operation 'Sunrise'. Nebulous and seemingly trivial visits of Italian businessmen and clerics to Switzerland at the end of 1944 led through a carefully controlled maze of secret exchanges to the final signature of the armistice at Caserta by representatives of the German armed forces in Italy, over one million strong, in April 1945.

Mr Dulles's book, which draws on the detailed reports of his office in Berne, reveals each step in this intricate and delicate process, from the land, and which, in its initial stages, was only

made possible by the discreet co-operation of the Swiss military intelligence.

The early and unpromising feelers from Italy led by stages to the figure of General Karl Wolff, the powerful SS commander in Northern Italy, and to the senior German generals in that theatre of war.

The moves of the latter led to the summoning of Wolff to account personally for his activities to Hitler, and, together with the obstructive caution of the senior German commander in the southern theatre, Field Marshal Kesselring, the links patiently woven in Switzerland were, on more than one occasion on the German side, within hours of snapping.

On the Allied side, the proper step of informing Stalin of these Berne negotiations raised in Moscow the ghost of a separate peace on the eve of President Roosevelt's death, and caused perhaps the first major rift in the Grand Alliance. The Americans and the British were brutally accused by Stalin of negotiating 'behind the back of the Soviet government' with a view to using the German armies in Italy to halt the Soviet armies advancing in the East. During crucial days, Operation 'Sunrise' was halted both under Soviet pressure, and the last-minute hesitations of Kesselring who arrested those German generals in the conspiracy who were under his command. Wolff, as an SS general, was beyond his reach, and his nerves held.

As the lines of clandestine communications extended, so did the risks of failure and, on the German side, of counter-conspiracy in Berlin: from Himmler and Kaltenbrunner. Secret meetings took place in Switzerland between General Wolff and Mr Dulles, followed by the mission to Switzerland of Generals Airey and Lemnitzer, carefully disguised, from the Anglo-American headquarters at Caserta, with the determined intention to reach an agreed surrender of the German armies on the Italian front.

The successful outcome of Operation 'Sunrise' was crowned at Caserta, but the hazards survived even through the last hours. This book sets out lucidly the whole complex story, and is of special significance in the history of war. Mr Dulles's own final analysis cannot be bettered:

One lesson we learned from 'Sunrise' was the vital importance of establishing a secret contact, and secure communications between the leaders on each side of the battle. . . . A vast amount of study and ingenuity goes into the task of preparing to wage war, but very little attention has been devoted to the even more important problem of how to bring war to an end once the fighting has started.

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standing example of such an enterprise.